

Pedagogical Description of Compliment-Response
Exchanges in a British Context for Chinese EFL Learners

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Table of Contents

1 Introduction-----	P5
1.1 Background-----	P5
1.2 Goal and Objectives-----	P7
2 Literature Review-----	P8
2.1 Compliment-Response Behaviour-----	P8
2.1.1 Compliments: Structures, Forms and Categories-----	P8
Functions and Topics	
Sentence Patterns	
Embedded Formulas and Framing Remarks	
Phonological Aspect	
2.1.2 Responses: Different Types of Responses-----	P12
2.1.3 Variables Affecting Response Strategies-----	P14
Cross-Cultural Differences	
Face and Politeness	
Power, Distance, and Rate of Imposing	
Chinese Patterns	
Verbal Taboos	
Pedagogical Implication	
2.1.4 Response to the Compliment Responses-----	P18
The Conversational-Maxim View	
Subclasses of Follow-up Moves	
Compliment-Response Sequence	
2.1.5 Pedagogical Description for Discourse-----	P22
Communicative Competence	
Functional Instruction	
Language Awareness	
Pragmatic Transfer	
Learners' Realization of L2 Compliment Response Sequences	
3 Data and Methods-----	P24
3.1 General Approach -----	P24
3.2 Design and Goals-----	P25
3.2.1 DCT One-----	P25
3.2.2 DCT Two-----	P26
3.3 Procedures and Subjects-----	P27
3.4 Limitations-----	P27
4 Discussions and Description-----	P28

4.1 The Choice of Response Strategies-----	P28
4.1.1 British Face-----	P30
4.1.2 Power and Distance-----	P32
4.1.3 Semantic Choices and Syntactic Structures-----	P34
4.2 The Follow-Ups of Compliment Responses-----	P35
4.2.1 The Patterns-----	P37
4.2.2 Conclusion-----	P43
5. Classroom Application: Compliment-Response Exchanges	P43
5.1 Authenticity-----	P43
5.2 Grading and Sequencing-----	P44
5.2.1 Form, Meaning, and Use-----	P44
5.2.2 Top-Down Approach-----	P45
5.3 Exercises -----	P46
6. Conclusion-----	P48
7. References-----	P49

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs)-----	P53
1.1 DCT One: Elicitation of British Compliment Responses	
1.2 DCT Two: Elicitation of British Responses to Compliment Responses (Follow-up Moves)	
Appendix 2: DCT Responses Data-----	P57
2.1 DCT One Responses	
2.2 DCT Two Responses	
Appendix 3: Classroom Exercises on Compliments-Response Exchanges-----	P76
3.1 Paying Compliments: Initiating Act Exercise	
3.2 Paying Compliments: Language Forms Exercise	
3.3 Responding to Compliments: Find the Differences	
3.4 Responding to Compliment: Identify the Compliment Response Strategies)	
3.5 Compliment-Response Exercise (Mingling)	
3.6 Identify the Complimenter	
3.7 Cooperative Follow-up Exercise	
3.8 Identify the Adjacency Pairs	

List of Tables:

Table 1. Classification of Compliment Response Strategies

Used in DCT One-----	P28
Table 2. The Number of the Subjects that Used Each of the Compliment Response Strategies-----	P31
Table 3. The Number of Subjects who Used Each Compliment Response Strategy in Each of the Five Situations of DCT 1-----	P32

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Some say teaching languages is teaching discourse. In the language classroom, the ultimate goal is to enable learners to be able to have meaningful communication. That is, it is more important from the communicative view to teach learners what to say and how to say according to the situations involved rather than teaching them discrete language units. After all, as Yule (1996:5-6) points out that “nothing in the use of the linguistic forms is inaccurate, but getting the pragmatics wrong might be offensive”. To non-native speakers of English, it is the pragmatics knowledge and discourse strategies that will help them avoid misunderstanding when communicating with native speakers of English, not the ability to pronounce a word correctly or knowledge to use the accurate syntactic patterns in order to have meaningful communication.

My study is about a speech event “compliment-response exchange”. My interests in this topic root in my awareness of how useful it can be if an EFL learner has the ability to give a compliment or respond to a compliment adequately. Native speakers have no problems giving compliments with a variety of syntactic and semantic choices. But non-native speakers of English, when receiving compliments in different contexts of English, feel nervous and can mostly reply with the appreciation token “thank you”. I myself, as a non-native speaker of English, experienced a few situations in which compliments were responded with “thank you with a smile”, and then embarrassment. This is one of the reason I found it interesting to explore this speech act.

Complimenting behaviour is an important speech act that hasn't been discussed in the mainstream course books for EFL/ESL learners. Manes and Wolfson (1981:127) indicate that the formulas of other speech acts such as greetings, thanks

and goodbyes are “overtly taught, whereas compliments are not”. They think that compliments have more functions than other speech acts thanks to their flexibility of location within sentences. Hatch (1992: 136) sees the conversational structure of compliment-response sequences as a speech event that “includes not just the speech act utterance but also the entire compliment interaction”. Concerning that the existing studies of this field focus mostly on compliment and responses, my study is to explore how native speakers English respond to compliments and make the follow-up moves. Seeking to provide a system of compliment-response sequences, I will focus on the “three-part exchange as an organizational unit.” (Tsui 1994:28) The possible illocutionary intent of the follow-up moves will be discussed so as to provide some functional language description.

So far, the studies have not paid noticeable attention to the response types of British native speakers of English. For the concern of cultural differences amongst native speakers of English, my study will focus on British people’s patterns of this speech event, trying to find out the cultural assumptions native speakers of British English adhere to. As Yule (1996:5) puts it, “another source of regularity in language use derives from the fact that most people within a linguistic community have similar basic experiences of the world and share a lot of non-linguistic knowledge.” Previous studies have given us some lights on the pragmalinguistic and sociolinguistics aspects of complimenting behaviour in many cultures, particularly on the compliment-response strategies and pragmatic transfer from L1 to L2. I will base on these literature and findings and explore a little bit more on the possible follow-ups of the responses. That is, I will try to sort out the possible “response to the response” in order to provide ESL/EFL learners strategies for a pre-patterned speech to avoid embarrassing moments.

1.2. Goal and Objectives

The primary goal of my study is to explore the norms of compliment-response exchanges of British native speakers of people. The objectives of my secondary goal include the following:

- (1) to identify the preferred compliment response strategies
- (2) to find out if power and distance affect the choice of compliment response strategies
- (3) to give examples and explanation based on the data retrieved
- (4) to establish a description of a three-part exchange in terms of sequential organization or adjacency pairs that show the language teachers or learners “structures of expectation” (Kramsch 1998)

My secondary goal is to devise a supplementary material for Chinese EFL learners at upper-intermediate level to help them equipped with both pragmalinguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge of complimenting behaviour. The material provides some classroom exercises with regards to the conversational routines of British compliment-response exchanges. The contents of the exercises will be based on the authentic discourse data I obtain. The selection, grading and sequencing will be justified in the Classroom Application session in 5.

According to Feez (1998: 23), “the objectives of a course based on a text-based [i.e. top-down] syllabus are always related to the use of whole texts in context”. She furthermore offers a sample of how this kind of approach can be realized in teaching conversation. From this point of view and based on the objectives provided by Feez (1998:23), the ultimate objectives of my product can be listed in the following account. The material aims at helping the learners:

- (1) understand the British cultural assumptions of giving compliments and responding to them.

- (2) identify the culturally different politeness principles between Chinese and British speakers of English.
- (3) know what topics are appropriate to compliment on and what the taboos of the cultural assumptions are in British-English speaking countries are.
- (4) recognize and use the key elements of a compliment-response conversation.
- (5) recognize and use conversational markers when needed to show politeness.
- (6) take turns appropriately within simple three-part exchanges. e.g.
 compliment→agreement→endorsement /
 compliment→disagreement→concession

2. Literature Review

2.1. Compliment-Response Behaviour

2.1.1. Compliments: Structures, Forms and Categories

Holmes (1988:446) defines compliments as “a compliment is a speech act which explicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some ‘good’ (possession, characteristic, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer.” (Holmes 1988: 446)

Functions and Topics

The main function of complimenting behavior, according to Manes and Wolfson (1981:130), is “to create or reinforce solidarity by expressing appreciation or approval”. “These bounding moves,” according to Hatch (1992:137), are not always identified by second language learners. It is also why many speakers tend to use the “compliment formulas”. They simply want their utterances to be easily identified as compliments. According to Hatch (1992 137), compliments in American English often serve as conversation openers and indicate closings. They can occur in the beginning, middle and the end of a conversation. Manes and Wolfson’s (1981) study

shows that the topics complimented are basically about appearances, ability and possessions.

Lexical Aspect

The lack of originality in the lexical choices for complimenting discovered by Manes and Wolfson (1981) also encourages EFL teachers to teach students this speech act. Eighty percent of all compliments in the corpus data built by Manes and Wolfson (1981:121) are categorized as adjectival. They discovered that “two thirds of all adjectival compliments make use of only five adjectives”. The five most commonly-used adjectives are: nice, good, beautiful, pretty and great. Wolfson (1984: 121) points out the reason that most compliments are made up of adjectives is because adjectives have “positive semantic value”. And that’s what the main function of complimenting needs: to have a positive evaluation.

The extremely high frequency of these five adjectives in American

English compliments may be very useful to language teachers and learners.

The point is, of course, that learners may with perfect appropriateness make use of the members of this set to speak of very nearly any topic in a complimentary statement.

Wolfson (1984: 122, my emphasis)

Other semantic patterns including the use of verbs, adverbs and intensifiers were also discussed by Manes and Wolfson (1981:118-19) based on the corpus they built.

Unlike adjectives, Manes and Wolfson (1981: 118) found that very limited verbs with positive semantic load make up the compliments and just two verbs “like and love” account for 86 percent of the compliments that include positive verbs. Non-positive verbs are often used together with the intensifier “really”. For instance, you really speak very good English. Manes and Wolfson (1981) also identified the importance of some intensifiers such as “quite” and “some” when it comes to sorting out the

semantic formulas of complimenting.

Sentence Patterns

According to Mane and Wolfson (1981: 120-121), the top three compliments formulas and examples are:

1. NP +is/look+ (really) + Adj.

For example:

Your blouse is really beautiful.

Your hair looks great!

2. I + (really) + like/love + NP

For example:

I really like your dress.

I love your new apartment.

3. Pro. + is + (really) + Adj. + NP

For example:

That's a really nice rug.

That's a great looking car. (Mane and Wolfson 1981: 120-121)

It is also discovered from their corpus that these three syntactic patterns take up to 85 percent of the compliments. These three patterns together with six additional patterns Mane and Wolfson found made up of 97.2 percent of the data they acquired.

The six additional syntactic patterns are:

4. You V (a) (really) Adj. NP

For example:

You have such beautiful hair.

5. What (a) Adj. NP!

For example:

What a lovely baby you have!

6. Isn't NP Adj.!

For example:

Isn't your ring beautiful!

7. You V (a) (really) Adj. NP

For example:

You (really) did a good job!

8. You V (NP) (really) Adv.

For example:

You (really) handled that situation well!

9. Adj. NP!

For example:

Nice game! (Mane and Wolfson 1981: 120-121)

Embedded Formulas and Framing Remarks

The two linguists also think that the embedded formulas--the introductory phrases of compliment such as "I think" or "I wanted to tell you" --should be further discussed. Similarly, another important element is the framing remark. Framing remarks are like pre-sequences. Their functions are discussed as follows:

serve the purpose of focusing attention on the object of the compliment or of intensifying the compliment in some way, they must be seen as part of the entire discourse unit, which includes the framing remark(s) if any, the formulaic compliment and any response.

Manes and Wolfson (1981:128, my emphasis)

The purposes of framing remarks can be shown in the following two examples

demonstrated by Manes and Wolfson (1981: 128, my emphasis):

(1) A: Did you get your hair cut?

B: Yes.

A: It looks cute.

B: Thanks.

(2) A: I love your sweater. It's beautiful. Where did you buy it?

In the two situations provided, the sentences in bold are identified as the framing remarks. The first one "Did you get your hair cut?" is meant to draw the recipient's attention and announcing the upcoming compliment. The second one "Where did you buy it?" fulfills its obligation by requesting "further information about the object complimented". (Manes and Wolfson 1981:129) These "pre-compliments" can prepare the recipient for using a discourse strategy to produce an adequate response and perhaps persuade the recipients to believe the compliments were given for the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings".

Finally, with this respect, Manes and Wolfson noticed some constraints of the use of adjectives and verbs. They discovered that adjectives are in most cases in their basic forms, not comparative or superlative forms. Verbs are to be used in most of the time simple present tense or past tense. Namely, "the combination of a restricted semantic set and an even more highly restricted set of syntactic structure" tells us that it's not just a matter of frequency. (Manes and Wolfson: 1981: 123)

Phonological Aspect

As the illocutionary intent of compliments is to make people feel good with a positive evaluation, they are usually given in a high tone realized in exclamation.

2.1.2.Responses: Different Types of Responses

Cultural differences contribute to different types of preferred response strategies. These inter-cultural communication aspects will be discussed later in 2.1.3. As greeting expects greeting in response, compliment expects a “compliment response (CR)” in response. This compliment-response sequence can perhaps be seen as an “adjacency pair” in which one initiation utterance is expecting a conventionalized response. Unlike greeting, a complimenter is usually expecting the compliment recipient to respond with a different second pair-part. It can be generally divided into two types: agreement and non-agreement. As the compliment response types across a number of cultures have been studied for almost three decades, there are a number of categorizations of response types.

Herbert (1986:78) provides a characterization of compliment responses on the basis of the earliest compliment-response study conducted by Pomeranz (1978). Herbert (1986:78) categorizes American compliment responses into twelve types: “Appreciation Token, Comment Acceptance, Praise Upgrade, Comment History, Reassignment, Return, Question, Scale Down, Disagreement, Qualification, No Acknowledgement and Other Interpretation”.

Billmyer (1990: 36) offers a similar system with fewer categories:

1. Downgrading

A: That’s nice shirt you are wearing!

B: Well, I just got it. It was pretty cheap.

2. Questioning

A: You did an excellent job yesterday, Jim! I really enjoyed your presentation.

B: Do you really think so?

A: Oh, yeah, it was fabulous.

3. Shifting Credit

A: I love your clock. It looks great in your living room!

B: Thanks. A friend of mine brought it to me from Oregon.

4. Returning

A: You are looking well!

B: Thanks. So are you!

Other linguists provide similar systems of compliment response types. Given the above characterization of the categories of compliment responses, we are able to decide what strategies are being used in the data we retrieve later in discussion session.

2.1.3. Variables Affecting Response Strategies

Cross-Cultural Differences

When it comes to pragmatics, the cross-cultural differences can't be neglected. It is these different cultural assumptions that cause cross-cultural misunderstanding or hinder the acquisition of second language learners. Some cultures place a positive value upon "oldness or newness", but some cultures don't. Over the decades, numerous cross-cultural contrastive analysis have been conducted by the linguists to find out the norms, taboos, and language forms of different languages that conflict with one another.

Among the hypotheses and studies, it is commonly accepted that people from a collectivist culture and people from an individualist culture have different cultural assumptions of politeness. Brislin (1994: 78-80) defines individualism and collectivism as follows:

Individualists are socialized to be self-reliant and to have more of a sense of separation from their extended family and from their community... The most important distinction between collectivists and individualists is the emphasis

placed on the feelings and opinions of group members and the psychological closeness between a person and others. Collectivists are more willing to downplay their own goals in favor of group preferences.

This can be explained with Brown and Levinson's notion (see the following session "Face and Politeness") of the two faces people tend to maintain.

Face and Politeness

According to Brown and Levinson's (1978) sociolinguistic theory about politeness, in order to maintain social relationships, people try not to acknowledge the face of other people. There are two kinds of faces in the world: "negative face" and "positive face". Negative face is about a person's desire for independence and not being imposed. Positive face is one's wish to be liked by people and to belong to a certain group. Pridham (2001:52) explains that "you challenge someone's face in two ways: either by telling them what to do, which implies you have rights over them, or by showing you disagree with or do not appreciate their values and beliefs". By challenging other people's faces, one is said to be having a "face-threatening act". To avoid face-threatening or minimize the degree of face-threatening, there are various strategies one can employ such as saying something in response in low key, saying something with a delay or saying something with hedges that indicate hesitation. Brown and Levinson (1978) think that the interactional systems are built on the basis of these universal politeness principles.

Some researchers think that Brown and Levinson's concept only applies to individualist societies like America or the UK. It is argued that to people in the individualist societies, it's the negative face of not imposing people that is Chinese people, like Japanese people, are collectivist. The effects from collectivist societies on the notion of politeness are questioned by a Japanese linguist

Fukushima (2000) who argues that because individualism has developed in contemporary Japanese society as the economy has grown, it is thus doubtful whether the so-called collectivist societies still keep the same norms. The argument can also be considered when examining Chinese societies like Taiwanese Chinese society.

According to Lorenzo-Dus (2001:110), “societies with a negative politeness orientation place high value upon avoiding disagreement, positive politeness cultures do not necessarily see disagreement as interactionally inappropriate”. In Chinese societies, avoid self-praise in conversation is more important. Sometimes it is important to express disagreement in a conversation in order to be polite. This norm of avoiding agreement with others, particularly in compliment-response conversation is particularly different from individualist societies’ norm.

Power, Distance and Rate of Imposing

It is no doubt that people don’t talk in the same manner on all occasions. Thus in analyzing conversations, what contribute to the changes of ways of speaking need to be considered. It is assumed by linguistics that power (social status), age, sex, ethnic identities (culture) are all variables of the styles of utterances. Generally speaking, in talking to people who have power over us, we talk in a more polite and careful manner. When talking with close friends, we may be saying things sarcastically and not threatening any one’s face. Later in our data, we will seek to find out how power and distance affect people’s utterances, though it is very difficult to examine these variables. The actual relationships among speakers are dynamic and open to negotiation. It is sometimes impossible to judge the relationship between people on the basis of the traditional assumptions.

Chinese Patterns

Response Patterns of Chinese Speakers and Native Speakers of English differ. Chen (1993:72-73) provides a system of Chinese compliment-response strategies that include: (1)Disagreeing and Denigrating (e.g.No, it's not that nice.) (2)Expressing Embarrassment (e.g. No. I'm embarrassed. It's not that good.) (3)Explaining (e.g.No, it's an old sweater from my brother.) (4)Thanking and Denigrating (e.g. Thanks, but I know I am older and don't look nice.) (5)Thanking only.

By contrast with the American compliment response strategies Herbert (1986) provided, we can see clearly that most Chinese people to disagree the compliments. In Chinese culture, the value of modesty has been greatly emphasized in a number of Chinese Books, such as The Analects of Confucius, Mencius, The Great Learning, etc. When the complimenter is of higher status, the responder often lightly downgrades the object of compliment after accepting compliments so that s/he would appear to be modest in order to be polite. According to Yu (2003:1685) the balance of face "plays a crucial role in Chinese discourse, because giving face to others at the same time helps one earn the recognition of the group, thereby not only protecting but also enhancing one's own face".

Chen (2003: 178) furthermore points out the response preferences of Mandarin speakers in Taiwan: In addition to the use of a single super strategy, such as Accepting, Returning, Mitigating, Rejecting, Mandarin speakers in Taiwan also switch strategies and use formulas when responding to compliments. The use of strategy switching may serve as a solution type to get out of the dilemma.

Verbal Taboos

Dornyei and Thurrell (1992: 135-36) provides some dos and don'ts for having a conversation with British middle class people. Among the principles they provide, the following deserves more attention as we are examine compliment-response

exchanges: (1) Avoid silences. (2) An answer to a question should be uttered without any hesitation. (3) Try not to make conversational contribution too little. (4) Avoid not initiating topics. (5) Don't give brief answers. These doctrines correspond to Grice's (1975) "Cooperative Principle" we will discuss in the following session.

Pedagogical Implication

The cross-cultural aspect of pragmatics involves ethnic identity. As Thornbury and Slade (2006) explain that some immigrants even try to keep some characteristics of the accent of their mother tongue. They furthermore states that "many non-native speakers choose not to adopt native-speaker pragmatic norms" so that they will not be "seen by their peers as having 'crossed over' to the dominant native-speaker community". (Thornbury and Slade 2006: 285) Thornbury and Slade (2006:285) points out the difficulties of deciding what to teach, "Encouraging learners to adopt the conversational style of a group which they do not wish, or are not allowed, to become members of, may be futile and de-motivating."

In terms of communicative needs for the EFL learners, it is more important to teach the learners how to speak appropriately "in the domain of linguistic variability", so that the learners will not "find social interaction with native speakers in their new language to be a relatively negative experience". (Segalowitz and Gatbonton 1977: 86)

2.1.4 Response to the Compliment Responses: The Follow-up Moves

The Conversational-Maxim View

Grice's (1975) thinks that when having a conversation, speakers try to be cooperative.

Our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did. They are characteristically, to

some degree at least, cooperative efforts; and each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction. (Grice 1975: 45)

This Gricean view is known as the “Cooperative Principle” that includes four maxims : Quantity, Quality, Manner, and Relation. The “Quantity Maxim” suggests people give their conversational utterances as much as needed, not too much and not too less. The “Quality Maxim” advises people to say something that he or she is sure of. Later when we examine the data of compliment-response exchanges we’ll adopt this view. This Maxim is often adhered to by people with hedges. The “Relation Maxim” concerns relationship. Thus, do not say something in return that has nothing to do with the topic or the previous utterance. The connections between sentences might be examined by Cohesion and Coherence. Lastly, the “Manner Maxim” suggests people make contribution clearly, briefly and orderly.

Subclasses of Follow-up Moves

To examine what is likely to occur in the follow-up move, let’s take a look at Tsui’s (1994) categorization of the “subclasses of follow-up acts”. Three types of follow-up acts are included by Tsui (1994): endorsement, concession and acknowledgement. Endorsement is often preceded by “positive outcome of the interaction” and is usually realized with a set of positive words like great, wonderful and good. We can perhaps include “agreement of compliments” as a positive outcome of the interaction in that they are often decoded as trying to avoid face-threatening. According to Tsui (1994:200-02), endorsement can be realized in a number of ways: Reinforcement of the Agreement, Reformulation the Preceding Positive Utterances, Upgrading the Agreement in the Response, and Making a

Commenting on the Information Provided, Thanking, and Evaluating.

The second category of the follow-up acts is viewed as concession. Unlike endorsement, it is usually preceded by a negative outcome and usually preferred with a marker such as “that’s too bad” indicating that the response is not what is preferred. Thus, later when we discuss the compliment-response sequences, the follow-up moves of “disagreement of compliments” should be seen as concession. Tsui (1994:195) points out the difference of endorsement and concession lies in “the linguistic realizations of these two moves: the former is given immediately, the latter is prefaced with ‘well’ and ‘anyways’, indicating that the response is ‘dispreferred’.”

The third type of follow-up acts is called acknowledgement. Tsui (1994:205) thinks follow-ups of this type serve as “a minimal acknowledgement that the response has been heard, understood, and accepted”. It is usually realized with some markers of understanding such as “‘okay’, ‘right’, ‘alright’, ‘yeah’, ‘oh I see’, or a repetition of the preceding response in low key”. (Tsui 1994: 205)

Compliment-Response Sequence

In session 2.1.3, we have looked through a number of variables that will change the way a compliment recipient respond to a compliment including gender, age, social status of the participants, familiarity between the participants, cultural assumptions. We also looked at Grice’s conversational maxims that functions as framework of adequate conversations. By adopting Gricean view, we can perhaps look into the strategy native speakers of English adopt in order to respond to the compliment response. Let’s take a look at the following example:

A: Wow! That’s a nice coat!

B: No...it’s a bit old.

A: But it goes well with the colour of your hair!

In this example we see the initiator offers a statement in exclamation, namely a compliment. The compliment recipient does not agree to the statement which runs a risk of threatening the complimenter's face. To respond to the response, the complimenter "renews" his/her compliment with an attempt to justify his/her sincerity. Thus, the sequential organization of this conversation can be demonstrated as:

A→Compliment

B→Disagreement

A→Renew of Compliment

Hatch (1992:137, my emphasis) points out the underlying schema behind such kind of patterns, "Somehow the compliment must be acknowledged and a bridge must be provided to the next topic. As long as the person continues to deny the compliment and provides no bridge, the compliment structure recycles on." It is this sort of mechanism we are trying to discover. Notice that the compliment response in the preceding example is just one of the twelve strategies offered by Herbert (1986). It is thus interesting to explore the possible patterns of this sort which can contribute to the Sociopragmatic knowledge of EFL learners.

Hatch (1992:137) offers a few sequential description of this speech event. There is a normal expectation by NSs of American English that compliment-response interaction goes like this: "compliment + acknowledgement/acceptance + bridge". She indicates that if the compliment is not accepted and a bridge for the next topic is not provided, the complimenter will have to renew his/her compliment. This schema is perhaps suitable for NSs of British English, not American English, as in Chen's study (1993:54) it is discovered that almost one third of Americans prefer disagreement when receiving a compliment.

2.1.5 Pedagogical Description for Discourse

“A pedagogical grammar depends on critical assumptions about the nature of language and its relationship to language learning.” (Tomlin 1994: 141)

Communicative Competence

Since my study is aimed at providing strategies/patterns and exercises for enhancement of learners’ communicative competence, here we take a look at what communicative competence is about. According to Yule (1985), communicative competence includes three components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. My study is mainly focused on the sociolinguistic component that requires learners to be familiar with “the cultural context of L2 if the learner is to develop sociolinguistic competence”. (Yule 1985: 169) Therefore, the functions of the utterances will be examined other than just the structural aspects. As Littlewood (1981:1, my emphasis) puts it, “One of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view.”

The most efficient communicator in a foreign language is not always the person who is best at manipulating its structures. It is often the person who is most skilled at processing the complete situation involving himself and his hearer, taking account of what knowledge is already shared between them (e.g.) from the situation or from the preceding conversation), and selecting items which will communicate his message effectively. (Littlewood 1981: 4)

Functional Instruction

As Cook (1989:27) puts it, “functional courses set out to list the purposes for which

students might wish to use language, and then to teach them how to do so.” The strength of such focus is that learners can learn something they can’t learn in formal language courses. They can learn how to greet people, how to make conversational closing properly, and how to have compliment-response exchanges politely. However, the weakness of such courses is also pointed out by Cook (1989:28) who claims that “not all functions can be so neatly labelled, nor is there always such a neat correspondence between a single utterance and a single function”.

Language Awareness

Carter (1993:145) suggests that adopting a “contrastive principle” is useful to make learners aware of the “form, function, and socio-cultural meaning”. The idea of “contrastive principle” is to “see things perceptively, creatively and with understanding if things are viewed not in isolation but set alongside each other”.

Pragmatic Transfer

Pragmatic failure can be divided into two types: pragmalinguistic failure and Sociopragmatic failure. It is discovered that learners’ realization of L2 sequences is easily effected by their structural awareness in L1. Huth (2006: 2045, my emphasis) put the transfer in this way:

even after explicit instruction and repeated in-class practice of target language pragmatics, pragmatic transfer may occur...L2 learners may effectively be made aware of their transfer by means of teaching L2 sequence structures. Being aware of pragmatic transfer in a specific situational and sequential environment represents an important step towards increasing one’s cross-cultural competence in interaction and may be regarded as a success of teaching L2 pragmatics.

On the basis of this idea, we understand by teaching EFL learners L2 complimenting formulas, they will notice the gap between L1 and L2 in the compliment-response area. The issue of pragmatics transfer with regards to cross-cultural communication has long been discussed, and yet there's no clear evidence that it does take place. In Mohan and Lo's (1995) contrastive study between Chinese and English texts, no noticeable differences were found. How do language teachers deal with this controversial variable of acquisition of communicative competence? McCarthy (1991:165) suggests that language teachers make their own judgments by their "intuition, experience and their own data". Hugh (2006) suggests authentic material helps learners' realize the compliment response sequences.

If L2 learners can learn about specific aspects of L2 pragmatics with authentic examples of naturalistic conversational sequences which enables them to anticipate, interpret, and produce sequential patterns that are cross-culturally different, cross-cultural miscommunication may be effectively prevented by means of classroom teaching. (Huth 2006:2026)

3. Data and Methods

3.1. General Approach

In order to sort out the patterns and develop the supplementary material mentioned in session 1.2, I will conduct a conversational analysis method by Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs). Before we move on the design and the goals, let's first consider the following research questions concerning the choice of responding strategies.

1. Do British subjects prefer a certain kind of CR strategies?
2. Do Power and Distance affect the CR strategies of British subjects?
3. How are the compliment responses realized? Are hedges used to show politeness?

4. Do the follow-ups of compliment responses of British subjects keep to Gricean Cooperative Principles?
5. What are the possible patterns of the sequential organization of this discourse type?

3.2 Design and Goals

As I noted in 3.1, I decided to obtain the data by the use of a controlled elicitation procedure with DCTs. DCTs are widely used as controlled elicitation tools to collect written discourse for discourse analysis. Blum-Kulka et al. (1989:13) points out that written elicited data “enables us to obtain more stereotyped responses”.

To avoid focusing on isolated acts, I will consider responses to compliments and the possible follow-ups to compliment responses—the speech event. As it is beyond the scope of this study to investigate all aspects of compliment, I will place more emphases on the sociopragmatic aspect.

With DCTs, one can easily control the contextual variables that are significant for this study. The controlled variables about a given context in production questionnaires make it possible to look into the effect of the variables. Nevertheless, the data we can obtain from the DCTs will show us only “discourse in written form”. It is thus not as authentic as “verbal responses”. Furthermore, the phonological aspects can’t be examined.

3.2.1 DCT One

The first DCT (See Appendix 1.1) aims at exploring the possible compliment response strategies used British native speakers of English. Five scenarios are given for the participants, so they have a picture of where it is and what the relationship between the speakers is. The participants carry the roles of the compliment

recipients and are asked to respond to the compliments in one to three sentences, including nonverbal response. The scenarios are supposed to be the possible situations EFL learners will receive compliments. Moreover, the scenarios are designed intentionally to show complimenting among people with equal status and complimenting among people with unequal status. The result of the test is also expected to show how Power and Distance affect the responses. Rate of Imposing is not included as this speech act has nothing to do with it basically.

The situations with the peer (status equal) are Situation 2 and 3 in which the complimenter are friends or classmates of the recipients. The compliment-response exchanges take place on the street or at a class party. The situations in which compliments are given downward are Situation 1 and 4 in which the complimenter are teachers and mothers of the recipients. The situation in which there's no familiarity between the complimenter and recipient is Situation 5. In Situation 5, the compliment is offered from a stranger in a public place.

Basically in the situations, references to gender, age, nationality, and the first language are avoided. The only references to gender appear in Situation 4 and 5. Gender Variable is not discussed and tested in this study basically, although there's a great difference between men and women in giving compliments and responding to them.

3.2.2 DCT Two

In the second DCT (See Appendix 1.2), there are twelve complimenting situations given without clear description of where it is and who the participants are. The subjects play the roles of the complimenter and are asked to write down the possible follow-ups of the compliment responses. The subjects are free to imagine the characters in the situations. Similar to DCT 1, no references to gender, age,

ethnicity and the first language are made. The characters constructing the dialogues have no names, so there's no indication of gender. In the twelve situations provided, different compliment response strategies are used. The strategies are based on Herbert's (1986) model that concludes twelve possible CR strategies. This design aims at exploring the possible follow-ups of different compliment responses made by British native speakers of English.

3.3 Procedure and Subjects

The data collected were coded and analyzed in order to identify instances of both linguistic form and linguistic function. The results will be presented and discussed in 4. Each of the tests expects twenty to thirty British native speakers of English as the subjects. A total of 25 subjects responded to each test in the end. The subjects were partially recruited via online instant messenger "skype," partially found randomly in public places, and partially from e-mail recruitment among the postgraduate students of the University of Edinburgh.

The subjects were asked to read the written situational descriptions and to write down their verbal responses to the situations. There was no screening process specifically on gender or age as the study aims at acquiring natural responses from British NSs only.

3.4 Limitations

The data obtained from DCT may not provide a fully authentic picture of what the subjects have actually said in real-life situations. Nevertheless, the data should be able to reflect the norms which the group of target subjects keeps to. Weizman (1989: 82) points out that DCT "provides us with evidence of what the informants believe people would typically utter in a given situation". Besides, since the

responses are presented in written forms, the phonological aspects can't be discussed. As Tsui (1994:18) puts it that "the fact that an initiating move sets up the expectation of a responding move does not mean that the former will always be followed by the latter".

4. Discussion and Description

In this section, I will present the results of the discourse analysis of the data in the following order:

1. the results of DCT 1 (4.1)
2. the results of DCT 2 (4.2)

4.1 The Choice of Response Strategies

Response Type	Example
Agreement	
Appreciation Token	Thanks. / Thank you. /Thank you very much!
Comment Acceptance	Thank you. I was hoping so.
Praise Upgrade	Of course it is. I did it myself. /Isn't it?
Comment History	Thanks very much. I've just had it cut.
Reassignment	I learned it from a master.
Return	I like what you are wearing too.
Giving Credits	Thanks for saying so. /Thanks. That's very nice of you!
Giving Credits to the Complimenter	That's thanks to you! / I learned it from you! /That's with your help!

Nonagreement Scale Down Question Disagreement Qualification Silence	It's only packing. It's not that important! Do you really think it suits me? I'm not that good. /I can't sing. Well...it is Ok...
C. Neutral 14.Other Interpretation 15. Joking	Thank you. I had it cut at... Thanks, but I didn't buy it here. You are not very musical, are you? You must be deaf. It's one of my many secret talents.

Table 1: Classification of Compliment Response Strategies Used in DCT One. (Adapted from Herbert 1986:79)

There is a total of 130 compliment responses we can see from the DCT 1 Response (See Appendix 2.1). I will discuss them mainly according to Herbert's perspective. Slightly different from Herbert's (1986) categorizations which include Agreement, Nonagreement and Other Interpretation, I will categorize the responses into: Agreement, Nonagreement, and Neutral. As can be seen from Table 1 above, each category has a few subcategories.

Agreement includes Herbert's ideas of six subcategories we've looked at earlier. They are: Appreciation Token (will be discussed as AT for convenience), Comment Acceptance (CA), Praise Upgrade (PU), Comment History (CH), Reassignment and Return. Nevertheless, other than the six strategies, I found it necessary to give name

to a certain kind of response. That is: Giving Credits (GC). In the data we can see some responses directly describing how the compliment works in return. Take a look at the examples below:

- (1) That's very kind of you to say so.
- (2) That's encouraging.
- (3) Thanks. I'm pleased about that.
- (4) Thank you for noticing my improvement.

This strategy was not offered by Herbert, and yet I found the abundance of its occurrence in this situation. It is to identify the function of the compliment and give an account of how it works on the recipient or compliment back on the compliment itself. There are 16 responses of this type out of 130. That is 12.31% of all responses.

Another new subcategory I added is: giving credits to the complimenter (GCC). GCC responses differ from GC responses in that the former assert the object complimented is good because of the complimenter while the latter express positive feedback as evaluation of the compliment. Consider the following:

- (5) Thank you. That's with your help.
- (6) That's thanks to you!
- (7) I learned it from you!
- (8) Thank you. I have enjoyed your course and it has made me more confident

4.1.1 British Face

As can be seen in Table 2 below that of all the responses, 76.15% of them belong to agreement, while only 38% of them belong to disagreement. This suggests us that British people, in an individualist culture, try to agree with compliments. The data also shows that AT strategy and CH strategy have the most occurrences, with 27

responses each. They are the super strategies British people prefer. The second popular strategy appears to be GC strategy, with 16 occurrences. Following these three most commonly-used strategies are OI and joking. Other interpretation according to the data is usually with regards to comment history (e.g. Thanks!) I had it done in.../Thanks. I got it in...) and suggestion (e.g. Let's form a duet! /Let's start a band!) The comment history brought about is usually giving the complimenter a chance to obtain the object complimented. We might see it as an offer.

Type	Number	Percentage	
1. Appreciation Token	27	20.77	Agreement: 76.15%
2. Comment Acceptance	6	4.62	
3. Praise Upgrade	3	2.31	
4. Comment History	27	20.77	
5. Reassignment	5	3.85	
6. Return	6	4.62	
7. Giving Credits	16	12.31	
8. Giving Credits to the Complimenter	9	6.92	
9. Scale Down	1	0.77	Nonagreement: 6.15
10. Question	2	1.54	
11. Disagreement	2	1.54	
12. Qualification	2	1.54	
13. Silence	1	0.77	
14. Other Interpretation	10	7.69	Neutral: 17.69%

15. Joking	13	0.1	
	Total 130		

Table 2: The Number of the Subjects that Used Each of the Compliment Response Strategies. (Adapted from Herbert 1986:80)

4.1.2 Power and Distance

It is noticeable that (See Table 3 Below) among all the situations provided, GCC responses occur only in situation one and situation four. In both situations the compliments are given downward from someone with a higher status. In situation one a teacher gives compliment to his/her student, and in situation four a mother pays compliment to her son/daughter. We can find that with teacher's compliment, none of the responses goes to nonagreement. As a matter of fact, most of the responses almost adopt two strategies only: the AT strategy and GC strategy. The use of GC strategy most probably forms an adjacency pair with the compliment from a teacher. Thus the compliment is to encourage, and the response "encourages" the complimenter back. It goes without saying there's no joking in talking with someone who has control over your academical performance.

Strategy	Number of Occurrences in Each Situation (From One to Five)	
1. Appreciation Token	9 5 3 1 9	Agreement
2. Comment Acceptance	4 0 1 0 1	
3. Praise Upgrade	1 1 0 1 0	
4. Comment History	0 8 7 9 3	

5. Reassignment	0 1 0 4 0	
6. Return	0 1 0 0 5	
7. Giving Credits	8 4 3 1 0	
8. Giving Credits to the Complimenter	4 0 0 5 0	
9. Scale Down	0 0 0 1 0	Nonagreement
10. Question	0 1 0 1 0	
11. Disagreement	0 0 2 0 0	
12. Qualification	0 2 0 0 0	
13. Silence	0 0 0 1 0	
14. Other Interpretation	0 2 2 1 5	Neutral
15. Joking	0 1 8 1 3	

Table 3: The Number of Subjects who Use Each Compliment Response Strategy in Each of the Five Situations of DCT 1

Similarly, sons and daughters, out of respect, mostly agree to what their mothers say. Nevertheless, Table Three also tells us that there're more nonagreement of mothers' compliments and even one joking response. This is probably because of the distance between the participants. The rate of familiarity seems to mitigate the face-threatening of nonagreement. From Table Three, we can find significant evidence that GCC strategy, as mentioned earlier, is only used under the power-dominating circumstances. This is strong evidence of how power affects the way people carry on their conversation.

Situation 2 and 3 are about paying compliment to someone with equal status as the complimenter. In situation two, the compliment is offered by a friend on the

street; in situation three, it's offered by a classmate at a class party. In both situations, more response strategies are used. Strategies include AT, CH and GC are the most popular strategies in responding to someone with similar social status. Joking is given dramatically more times in situation three than others. This is probably because of where the compliment-response conversation takes place: a party. It is understandable that party occasions promise more laughter. Atmosphere of freedom altogether with status equality give rise to the occurrences of jokes. Even those accompanied with irony are not considered to be face-threatening at all. This is similar to Lorenzo-Dus' (2001:113) discovery that "The British respondents combined irony/humour with various types of agreeing CRs (especially comment acceptance, history and return)".

The familiarity of speakers is specially challenged in situation five in which the compliment is offered by a stranger. We can see clearly from Table Three again that the responses for this situation fall into the category of agreement completely. The most-adopted strategies in responding to a stranger's compliment are AT, OI and Return. The use of OI strategy appears most in this situation. This is most probably due to the distance between the speakers. A complete stranger's compliment is easily decoded as requesting for information or help. The presupposition hold by the recipient for a complete stranger's giving a compliment to him/her might be explained as: The stranger wants some help or information. It is impolite to bring the need straightly. Therefore giving a compliment can be a good way to elicit what he or she wants.

4.1.3 Semantic Choices and Syntactic Structures

Manes and Wolfson's (1981) discovered the grammatical tenses used for giving compliments are mostly simple present or past tense. From the data we find that the

compliment responses are commonly realized with present perfect tense. This can be understood as it appeared mostly in CH responses or CA responses that give explanation.

(9) Thank you. I have worked very hard.

(10) Well, I have travelled quite a lot.

(11) I usually just sing in the shower, but I've always wanted to be a singer.

Another explanatory grammatical tense included in the data is present perfect continuous. For example:

(12) I'm glad as **I've been studying** all week.

Apart from the presumable appreciation token “Thanks” and “Thank you”, some other ATs such as “cheers” and “cool” were also given by the subjects. The new forms of appreciation token are widely used by younger generations. From the data we also find that unlike the limited syntactic patterns for giving compliments found by Manes and Wolfson (1981) in their study, it is difficult to determine a certain commonly-used syntactic formulas. On this aspect, we can only provide some “useful sentences” such as “That’s very nice of you! / I’m glad you like it”.

4.2 The Follow-Ups of CRs

Tsui (1994:30) sees a conversation that includes initiation, response and follow-up move as “two-part adjacency pairs or three-part exchanges”. Grundy (2000: 272) define adjacency pairs as “a fundamental unit of talk consisting o a sequence of two paired units produced by different speakers so that the ‘first pair part’ triggers an appropriate ‘second pair part’”.

Because the elicitation in each situation already contains an initiating move and a responding move, altogether with the follow-up move, we shall be able to find two

adjacency pairs in each of the three-part exchanges. My goal is to find the sequential organization of the three-part exchanges or the preferred choices in adjacency pairs in compliment-response speech events, particularly the second adjacency pair in each exchange.

To achieve my goal, I shall examine the results of DCT 2 by the systems Tsui (1994) provided. Apart from her follow-up system that includes “endorsement, concession and acknowledgement” (see 2.1.4), we will furthermore consider her “subclasses of elicitations” (Tsui 1994: 81-88) when analyzing the second adjacency pairs. The second moves (the compliment responses) of the speech events are to be seen as elicitation of the third moves (the follow-up moves).

According to Tsui (1994), the elicitation devices include six types: inform, confirm, agree, commit, repeat and clarify. In Inform Elicitation, the response is expected to provide a piece of information. In Confirm Elicitation, the addressee is expected to confirm the speaker’s assumption. If the response “disconfirms” the speaker, then it’s is considered to be face-threatening. An Agree Elicitation invites the address to agree with the speaker’s assumption which seems to be evidently true. For example: (Tsui 1994: 86)

On a sunny day.

A: Lovely day, isn’t it?

B: Yes, beautiful.

Commit Elicitation expects the recipient to make some kind of commitment.

Sometimes this commitment is obligatory. For example: (Tsui 1994:87)

A: Can I talk to you?

B: Sure.

Finally, with Repeat and Clarify elicitation, the titles explain.

Are there any preferred responses of the first pair of each exchange from DCT 2?

This question can be easily answered by the “choices of strategies” we talked about in 4.1. From the discussion earlier, we know that the top five strategies of British people are AT, CH, GC, Joking, OI (realized by CH and Offer). From the top five compliment responses we found, we can conclude the most-preferred patterns of the first adjacency pairs. They are:

- (1) Compliment→ Appreciation Token
- (2) Compliment→ Giving Credits
- (3) Compliment→ Joking
- (4) Compliment→ Other Interpretation (realized by Comment History or Offer)
- (5) Compliment→ Giving Credits to the Complimenter

Are four more strategies other than AT enough for learners? Later we will discuss the grading and sequencing issue of classroom material in 5.3. Now we shall move on to the second adjacency pairs: the “compliment response” and “response to the response”.

4.2.1 The Patterns

Situation 1

In this situation the first pair part includes a compliment and a SD response. In terms of politeness, the recipient is challenging the complimenter’s face by not fulfilling the illocutionary intent of the compliment: to make the recipient feel good. Thus, in order to reduce the face-threatening effect produced by the recipient, in the follow-up move the complimenters renew the compliment as we can see from Chart of DCT Two Responses (See Appendix 2.2).

The renew is mostly realized with a declarative with a bit of new information. We can see the SD response as an elicitation of inform. That is, due to politeness

principle, the complimenter has to renew his/her compliment if the recipient doesn't agree with the compliment. From the data we can also find many concession markers like "well", "but", "though", and "still". The use of these markers indicate that the recipients are usually adhered to "Quality Maxim". The following are the realization of the second adjacency pair of situation 1s.

(1) Compliment → Scale Down → Inform (Renew)

(Elicitation: Inform)

For example: A: Nice watch!

B: No...it's pretty old.

A: It's still nice though.

(2) Compliment → Scale Down → Relevant Question

For example: A: Nice watch!

B: No...it's pretty old.

A: Where did you get it?

Situation 2

In Situation 2, the first pair part is made up of a compliment and an agreement realized with a CH response. From the data we can find that all the responses "endorse the positive response" from the compliment recipient. They are thus realized with what Tsui (1994) provided (see Subclasses of Follow-up Moves in 2.1.4) within the category of endorsement:

(3) Compliment → Comment History → Endorsement (Evaluation/Relevant Comment)

For example: A: Nice bag!

B: I bought it for my trip to Japan.

A: How wonderful!

In the above example, the follow-up is a plain endorsement. If it is replaced with

“Wow...when are you going there”, then it is realized with a relative comment/question (RC/Q). There are also other ways of endorsement like evaluation “Good choice!” The complimenter focus on the subject complimented.

Situation 3

In situation three the exchange consists of a compliment and an agreement realized with a return strategy. As the compliment recipient offers a compliment to the complimenter too, the follow-up move can be analyzed as compliment response too.

As can be seen from the data, there's a wide range of the strategies used.

Nevertheless, as the responses are positive feedback, the follow-up moves can still be seen as endorsement.

(4) Compliment→Return→Endorsement

For example: A: I like your glasses!

B: Thank you! I like yours too!

A: That's very kind of you.

Situation 4

In this situation the compliment is responded with a question. The recipient doesn't agree with the complimenter. According to the results we get in 4.1 (see Table 2), the recipient is threatening the British face. This type of response isn't common but still occurs in British utterances. The follow-up moves of this response type show us that a Return compliment response can also be seen as a Commit Elicitation. As can be seen from the data, in most cases the recipient challenging the complimenter's face by questioning him/her, the complimenter in the follow-up utterances makes commitment of his “positive evaluation”. Thus, the Question response may be seen as Elicitation of Commit.

(1) Compliment→Question→Commit

For example: A: That sounds like a nice plan!

B: Do you really think so?

A: Of course, I do!

Situation 5

In Situation 5, a compliment is followed by a positive response: praise upgrade. The follow-up shows endorsement. And because of the form of the response (a declarative followed by a tag question), a positive “Yes” response is invited. We can see this sequence as the follows:

(7) Compliment → Praise Upgrade → Agreement

For example: A: I like your new shirt!

B: Really brings out the blue in my eyes, doesn't it?

A: Yes, it (really) does.

The follow-up can also contain evaluation such as “Amongst other things” or “(It) Also goes very well with your top” to show solidarity.

Situation 6

In this situation the compliment is not interpreted as compliment. It is decoded as a request. Thus, it is responded with an offer. In the follow-up moves, the offer is mostly accepted.

(8) Compliment → Other Interpretation (Offer) → Acceptance/Non-acceptance

For example: A: This is yummy!

B: Help yourself with another piece!

A: Thank you, I will. (Oh I couldn't. I am on a diet.)

Situation 7

In Situation 7, the response strategy used is qualification which belongs to the nonagreement category. The subject complimented is qualified in the response. In a sense, the recipient is not satisfied with the status/condition of the subject

complimented; the complimenter thus provides advice or reassures the recipient.

Notice that in both inform or advice, they are usually preceded with a negation to show that they really think the subject complimented is good already.

This speech event can be patterned as:

(9) Compliment → Qualification → Inform (Advice)

For example: A: I like your haircut.

B: But I want it even shorter.

A: No, it looks great! Maybe you can dye it?

(No, don't. It really suits you.)

Situation 8

In Situation 8, the recipient is shifting the credits to other people. Accordingly, the complimenter, to keep to Quality Maxim, reassign the compliment to either the subject itself or the third person mentioned. Notice the many occurrences of “quality markers” like “still”, “though”, “but”, and “well”. Therefore, we can say that a reassignment compliment strategy invites reassignment. It's exemplified as follows:

(10) Compliment → Reassignment → Reassignment (to the third person or the subject itself)

For example: A: I like your packing concept.

B: Thanks. It's David's idea actually.

A: Well, it is a good idea. (I still like it. / Then I like David's packing concept!)

Situation 9

In this situation the compliment is not acknowledged. The follow-up takes after the spirits of response: also silence. Although there's no clear indication as the ignorance was made on purpose or not, it is for sure an impolite response. To minimize the face-threatening, the complimenter, aside from being silent, re-offers the

compliment or asks for confirmation. Thus, we see the sequence as the follows:

(11) Compliment → No Acknowledgement → Silence (Renew/Elicit: Confirm)

For example: A: I like your new glasses!

B: (Silence)

A: (Silence) (I like your new glasses! / Where did you buy them?)

Situation 10

In this situation, the first pair part includes a compliment and disagreement.

The disagreement in such kind of exchange can be seen as an Elicitation of Inform.

The complimenter is invited to furthermore give a comment on the subject complimented. In responding to disagreement, some hedges and markers are used such as “well”, “but”, “I think”. The pattern is:

(12) Compliment → Disagreement → Inform

For example: A: Your haircut looks nice!

B: No...she cut it too short!

A: But it is nice. (Well I like it like that.)

Situation 11

In this situation the compliment is accepted. To respond to the positive evaluation, the complimenter furthermore endorses the response or upgrades his/her compliment.

(13) Compliment → Comment Acceptance → Endorsement (Upgrading)

For example: A: That's a very funny joke!

B: Yeah! I made it up myself.

A: Cool.(You are so clever. / It's the best I've heard in ages!)

Situation 12

In this situation the compliment is responded with an appreciation token. Thus the illocutionary intent is fulfilled. There's no need to renew the compliment and there's no extension of the response as the response is brief without new information added.

Thus, a bridge to the new topic or non-complimenting relevant comment is built in this pattern:

(14) Compliment→Agreement→Bridge (New Topic) or Relevant Comment/Question

For example: A: It's a very nice house that you have.

B: Thanks!

A: How long have you lived here?

4.2.2 Conclusion

Yalden (1987:42) suggests that in order to teach conversation, what is needed “is a model of language use that accounts for the essential features of the discourse process, rather than simply atomizing the user’s behavior into components of communicative competence”. In this section I tried to find the preferred patterns of compliment-response exchanges of British native speakers of English. The three-part exchanges are analyzed as adjacency pairs in that there are two utterances that expect a favoured response.

5. Classroom Application: Compliment-Response Exchanges

How do we conversation? What activities can we devise to acquaint learners with British norms of conversational exchanges? Thornbury and Slade (2006: 296) point out that the teaching of conversation always involves three elements: “instruction, exposure and practice”. There are arguments about the order of these elements in teaching conversation. Nevertheless, what’s more important is to manage to include all the components in a programme.

5.1 Authenticity

In teaching communication in the language classrooms, “the goal of teaching is to equip students to deal ultimately with the authentic language of the real world”. (Hedge 2000:67) This is why the discourse data I retrieved can be used for genuine source in the exercises I provide. Although there are some ellipses in the responses, the sentences they are embedded with are basically “fixed” to be grammatically correct. It may be argued that that’s how utterances are like in real life and if learners don’t get chances to be exposed to these “incorrect forms,” they will be very frustrated about not being able to understand the authentic language. However, that is just a little issue of teaching conversation. After all, there is no real authenticity in the classroom.

5.2 Grading and Sequencing

The exercises we’ll present in 5.3 are devised for the following purposes:

- (1)Paying Compliments: 1. 2.
- (2) Response: 3. 4. 5.
- (3)Follow-up Moves: 7. 8.
- (4)Awareness: 3(cultural differences) 6 (Power and Distance) 7(Politeness)
- (5)Accuracy: 1, 2,
- (6)Fluency: 5
- (7)Appropriateness: 3, 6, 7, 8

5.2.1 Form, Meaning, and Use

We try to provide some samples of exercises and activities that help learners to achieve accuracy, fluency, and raise their consciousness. Form, meaning and use of language are all considered. “Inferencing” is defined by Richards and Schmidt (1985:119) as “the process by which the learner drives a hypothesis or conclusion

about language based on the evidence presented”. We subscribe to this view and develop the exercises in the light of this view. Exercise 6, 7 and 8 offer learners chances to distinguish the different illocutionary intent of utterances.

5.2.2 Top-Down Approach

Most of the exercises are devised with a top-down approach that emphasizes the most general features of discourse. As Cook (1989) puts it, unlike bottom-down method that sees language as discrete units, to teach discourse with top-down method, the focuses are:

to the interaction of language and context which defines language function; to the possibility of establishing overall structures of discourse related to particular discourse types; and to conversational mechanisms.

(Cook 1989: 79)

Cook (1989) suggests a number of possible activities to teach discourse with this approach. Most of the exercises I devise are based on these suggestions. For example, “identification of compliment response strategies” and “identification of the relationships between the complimenter and compliment recipients” aim at raising learners' consciousness of the possible responding ways and underlying cultural norms by labelling the exchanges with provided information. Furthermore, some discussing issues are prompted in order to raise learners’ consciousness of the culturally-preferred norms. General discussion also helps learners to retrieve the most general and important issues of the discourse type.

As the pragmalinguistic elements and sociopragmatic strategies keep appearing in the exercise sheets, learners are “flooded” with these language forms and choices. As Timlin points out that the language teacher “seeks to provide the learner with a sufficient quantity of comprehensible input drawn from a wide variety of genuine or

authentic discourse contexts.” (1994: 142)

5.3 Exercises

Exercise 1 -- Initiating Act Exercise (See Appendix 3.1)

This is a “contextualized practice, which aims to make clear the link between linguistic form and communicative function.” (Hedge 2000: 273) The learners are asked to offer a compliment to each situation provided and then discuss with their partner. They will therefore think about the structures of compliments. The teacher in the end collects the compliments from some learners and writes them down on the blackboard. Then the teacher discusses with the learners about most common compliment formulas and correct the compliments on the blackboard if needed.

Exercise 2-- Language Forms Exercise (See Appendix 3.2)

In this exercise, learners are to do a cloze exercise that intends to get their attention to some linguistic/pragmalinguistic features of paying compliments.

Exercise 3 -- Find the Differences (See Appendix 3.3)

In this exercise, learners will be provided with some English compliment-response exchanges of native speakers of British English and Chinese non-native speakers of English. The learners are asked to identify exchanges possibly made with each culture according to their evaluation of the responding strategies. By being exposed to the texts, the learners’ awareness of cultural difference is raised.

Exercise 4 -- Identify the Compliment Response Strategies (See Appendix 3.4)

In this exercise learners are asked to relate the strategies to the actual language uses in the texts. By doing so, they internalize the strategies.

Exercise 5 – Mingling (See Appendix 3.5)

According to Richards (1985:90), “communication as interaction” is “aimed largely at the need of speaker and hearer to feel valued and approved of”. This is why we include this meaning-crossed mingling exercise. Through the exercise, learners will have the chance to “acquire the interactional skills” other than transactional skills.

In this exercise learners are divided into two groups to perform some kind of information gap activity. The learners in the first group are given a cue card each and are thus assigned to respond to the compliments with a certain strategy. The numbers of strategies used are echoing the true occurrences of them in the British Compliment Responses retrieved. So that the learners, with a bit of luck, “internalize” the norms of such discourse type.

The second group of learners are to move around and compliment on people in the first group. As long as the learners in the second group identify the right strategy used by pointing without speaking and approved by the compliment recipient, he or she gets a sticker from the compliment recipient. The learner with the most stickers becomes the winner. This exercise is suggested to be played three to four times with different subjects complimented, including appearances, ability and personal belongings. The first group and the second group take turn playing the roles of complimenters and compliment recipients.

Exercise 6 -- Identify the Complimenter (See Appendix 3.6)

According to Trappes-Lomax (2004: 145, my emphasis), “we can recognize a

context of situation by the kind of communicative functions that are typically realized in it ...and we can recognize a function by the kind of contexts required for its performance”. This exercise gives learners a chance to relate the compliment responses strategies used to the participants of the exchanges. So to speak, the intent of this exercise is to trigger learners’ cognition of how compliment responses are given to people with higher status, lower status, or familiarity. Learners make their decision by the functions of utterances they recognize. As Richards (1985: 88) puts it, “the choice of an appropriate strategy for performing a communicative task or speech act depends on such factors as the age, sex, familiarity, and roles of speaker and hearer”.

Exercise 7 -- Cooperative Follow-Up Exercise (See Appendix 3.7)

In this exercise learners have a chance to evaluate the appropriateness of utterances in terms of Grice’s Cooperative Principles.

Exercise 8 -- Identify the Adjacency Pairs (See Appendix 3.8)

In this exercise learners select the best follow-up moves provided to fit the different compliment responses.

6. Conclusion

In this study I reviewed and considered the main issues about the multi-functional speech act of complimenting behaviour and compliment responses. I conducted a small-scaled conversational analysis with the elicitation of discourse completion tests. From the responses of the discourse completion tests I identified

the preferred response strategies of NSs of British English and consider the variables of power and distance in the styles of talking. Besides, the preferred follow-up of different compliment responses are discovered and exemplified with linear flow charts and examples. Based on the “authentic” material I retrieved from DCTs and conventional teaching pedagogies, I devised some exercises that stimulate learner’s consciousness of the cross-cultural differences and language appropriateness. A meaning-crossed activity and language forms exercises are also included into the supplementary material. Hopefully these findings and material can be useful for Chinese EFL learners and more pedagogical description concerning the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of compliment-response exchanges for Chinese EFL learners will be available in the future.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs)

1.1 DCT One: Elicitation of British Compliment Responses

Thank you for taking part!

This discourse completion test is designed for my dissertation about a speech act: compliment and responses. The purpose of this test is to explore **how British native speakers of English respond to compliments**. In the five scenarios provided you have a particular role and receive a compliment for some reason. Please write down your **possible responses to the compliments** you receive **in one to three sentences**. In any case you feel a need to have nonverbal responses, please specify it. This test is entirely anonymous, and you will not be asked for any identifying information. Have fun!

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

1. You were taking Spanish language classes for a year. After giving a three-min self-introduction in Spanish, your teacher walked up to you and said “You’ve improved a lot on your speaking!” What would you say in response?

2. on your way home from the hair stylist, you run into a friend who exclaims “That’s a great haircut!” What would you say in response?

3. One of your classmates notices you singing during a class party then comes to you and says “Wow! You have such a nice voice! I had no idea you could sing like that!” What would you say in response?

4. Your mother is going on a trip to Malta with her friend. You are helping her with the packing. She says to you, “What a great packing concept!” What would you say in response?

5. You are shopping in a charity shop. A woman who is also shopping there smiles at you and says, "I like what you are wearing!" What would you say in response?

Thank you very much!
Have a nice day!

1.2 DCT Two: Elicitation of British Responses to Compliment Responses (Follow-up Moves)

Thank you for taking part!

This discourse completion test is designed for my dissertation about a speech act: compliment and responses. The purpose of this test is to explore **the possible follow-ups of compliment responses**. In the twelve situations provided, there're no clear settings about where it is and who the participants are. **You are supposed to carry the role of the complimenter**. In response to your compliments, there will be different utterances. Please draw on your own experiences and write down the **possible follow-ups to the responses in one to three sentences**. In any case you feel a need to have nonverbal responses, please specify it. This test is entirely anonymous, and you will not be asked for any identifying information. Have fun!

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

1. A: Nice watch!

B: No...it's pretty old.

A: _____

2. A: Nice bag!

B: I bought it for my trip to Japan.

A: _____

3. A: Wow! I like your glasses!

B: Thank you! I like yours too!

A: _____

4. A: That sounds like a nice plan!

B: Do you really think so?

A: _____

5. A: I like your new shirt.

B: Really brings out the blue in my eyes, doesn't it?

A: _____

6. A: This is yummy!

B: Help yourself with another piece!

A: _____

7. A: I like your haircut.

B: But I want it even shorter.

A: _____

8. A: I like your packing concept.

B: Thanks. It's David's idea actually.

A: _____

9. A: I like your new glasses!

B: (silence) (gives no indication of having heard the compliment.)

A: _____

10. A: Your haircut looks nice!

B: No...she cut it too short!

A: _____

11. A: That's a very funny joke!

B: Yeah! I made it up myself.

A: _____

12. A: It's a very nice house that you have.

B: Thanks!

A: _____

Thank you very much!

Have a nice day!

Appendix 2: DCT Responses Data

2.1 DCT One Responses

	1. You were taking Spanish language classes for a year. After giving a three-min self-introduction in Spanish, your teacher walked up to you and said “You’ve improved a lot on your speaking!” What would you say in response?
	Status: Downward Agreement: Nonagreement=26:0
26	AT=Appreciation Token= 9 CA=Comment Acceptance=4 PU=Praise Upgrade= 1 CH=Comment History= 0 (on ability, not object) GCC =Giving Credits to the Complimenter= 4 GC=Giving Credits= 8
CA GC AT GC AT GC GCC PU AT GC AT AT CA AT GCC CA AT GC	1. I’m glad as I’ve been studying all week. 2. That’s very kind of you to say so. 3. Thanks. 4. That’s encouraging. 5. Thanks very much. 6. Hey cool. 7. Thank you. That’s with your help. 8. I’ve improved a lot in three minutes, but you would expect that! 9. Thank you very much. 10. Thanks. I’m pleased about that. 11. Gracias. 12. Gracias. 13. Thank you, was hoping so. 14. Thank you very much. 15. Gracias senorita. I couldn’t have managed without your hard effort. 16. Thank you. I have worked very hard. 17. Gracias! 18. Gracias! Thank you for noticing my improvement.

GCC	19. That's thanks to you.
AT	20. Thank you.
CA	21. Thank you. I'll take it as a genuine compliment.
GC	22. Thank you. That's good.
GCC	23. Thank you. I have enjoyed your course and it has made me more confident
AT	24. Thank you very much.
GC	25. Thanks. I am glad to hear that.
AT+Disagreement_GC	26. Thanks. I didn't think so, but thank you!

	2. On your way home from the hair stylist, you run into a friend who exclaims "That's a great haircut!" What would you say in response?
	Status: Equal
26	OI=Other Interpretation=2 PU=Praise Upgrade=1 AT=5 Return=1 Question=1 Qualification=2 Reassignment=1 GC=Giving Credits=4 CH=Comment History=8 Joking=1
AT GC_CH GC Joking AT PU Return CH AT Question_CH AT GC	1. Thanks 2. I'm glad you like it - it cost me a fortune 3. Thanks for saying so. 4. Didn't you like my other haircut? 5. Thanks. 6. Of course it is...I did it myself. 7. Thanks. You look great as well. 8. I would hope so. I spent nearly 40 pounds on it. 9. Thank you. 10. Do you like it? just had it done. 11. Thanks. 12. Thanks! That's very nice of you!

Reassignment	13.Yeah, it's not bad.
Qualification_GC	14. I'm not sure really, but thank you.
GC_Question	15. Thank you for your compliment, you are very kind. Do you really think it suits me?
OI	16.Thank you. I had it cut at....
AT	17.Thanks.
CH	18. Thank you, It's the usual haircut I get.
CH	19.I just asked the barber to shave it all off.
CH	20.Thanks very much. I've just had it cut.
CH	21. Well Thanks! however, it wasn't the one I asked the stylist to do, but, whatever he came out with, isn't that bad.
OI	22.Thanks. I had it done in...
Question_Qualification	23.Do you really think so?
GC	I am not so sure.
Qualification	24.Thanks. I'm glad you like it.
CH	25.Well, it is Ok.. (a bit embarrassed)
	26. Thanks very much, thought I'd try something new.

	3. One of your classmates notices you singing during a class party, then comes to you and says "Wow! You have such a nice voice! I had no idea you could sing like that!" What would you say in response?
	Status: Equal
26	Joking=8 CH=7 OI=2 Disagreement=2 AT=3 GC=3 CA=1
Joking	1. I take after the dog. (laughing)
CH	2. Well I don't often sing in public.
Joking	3. It is one of my many secret talents.
OI	4. Let's form a duet!

Joking	5. There's a lot you don't know about me.
Joking	6. Are you having a laugh? I can't sing to save my life...(laughing)
GC	7. Thanks, that's so nice of you.
CH	8. I usually just sing in the shower, but I've always wanted to be a singer.
AT	9. Thank you.
CH	10. I like singing but don't get a chance to do it usually.
CH	11. Thanks. I had lessons when I was younger.
Disagreement	12. I'm not that good...
Joking	13. You must be deaf.
Question_Joking	14. Why? How can you be sure about someone's abilities without any witness? (smile)
GC	15. Thank you, but I think you are being kind to me.
AT	16. Thank you.
Joking	17. You are not very musical, are you?
GC	18. Thank you. I'm glad you like it.
Joking	19. I was miming.
Disagreement	20. I can't sing.
AT	21. Thank you.
OI	22. Thanks. Let's start a band.
CA	23. Well there hasn't been the occasion before. But I do enjoy singing in a non professional way.
CH	24. Thank you. I do like singing a lot.
CH	25. Well , I try to do my best in whatever things I do.
CH	26. Thank you, I never knew I was that good either.

	4. Your mother is going on a trip to Malta with her friend. You are helping her with the packing. She says to you, "What a great packing concept!" What would you say in response?
	Status: Downward Distance: Kinship Agreement: Nonagreement=20:3
26	Reassignment=4 CH=9

	AT=1 OI=1 Silence=1 Question=1 GCC=5 PU=1 SD=Scale Down=1 Joking=1 GC=1
CH CH Reassignment CH AT OI GCC Reassignment CH CH GCC GCC Reassignment Silence GC Question CH Reassignment PU CH CH Joking CH	1. I watched it on the discovery channel. 2. Years of practice. 3. I learned it from the master. 4. It's my pleasure. I want you to be happy on your holiday and I will help all I can. 5. Thank you. 6. Thanks a lot.. I have my uses. 7. Thank you, it's you who taught me how to do it. 8. You should ...to Dad more, he really knows how to pack. You should make him do it! 9. Yes, I've been doing it for years. 10. I wrapped the hard way t... ... athat I had to carry. 11. You taught me how. 12. I learned it from you! 13. Hope it works well. 14. (a smile and silence) 15. Thanks mum, but we all know where I get it from, don't we? 16. What is? 17. I have a lot of practice. 18. I learned this packing from a world traveler. 19. Isn't it? 20. Well, I have travelled quite a lot. 21. Practice makes perfect. I learned all this during my packing when going out to travel. 22. Great. Take me with you and I'll pack for you coming home. 23. There was an article in the 'Telegraph' travel section

GCC	last week. I thought I would try the system.
GCC	24. Oh, mum. I learned it from you!
Scale Down	25. Well mum, it is you who trained me.
	26. It's only packing, it's not that important!

	6. You are shopping in a charity shop. A woman who is also shopping there smiles at you and says, "I like what you are wearing!" What would you say in response?
	Status: Distance: Stranger
26	Different Appreciation Token AT=9 Return=5 OI=5 Joking=3 CH=3 CA=1
Joking CA+CH AT OI AT AT Return AT AT OI CA GC+Return GC +Joking AT	1. What this? I just threw them on without looking. 2. I love it too and I bought it here. 3. Cheers very much. 4. Come with me and I will give them to you. 5. Thank you. 6. Thanks. 7. Thanks. I like what you are wearing too. 8. Thanks. 9. Thank you very much. 10. Thanks but I didn't buy it here! 11. I have great style. Thanks. 12. How kind, I like what you're wearing too! 13. Thanks, glad you like it. You can have it for 10 pounds. (smile.) 14. Thanks.

CH	15. Thank you. I bought them from this shop a few weeks ago.
AT	16. Thank you.
AT	17. Thank you!
AT	18. Thank you. (smile)
CH	19. I bought it here.
OI	20. Thank you. I got it in....
Joking	21. Well, thank you madam, but whatever I am wearing, is not included in the charity sale.
OI	22. Do I remind you of your grandson?
GC+OI	23. That's very kind of you. When I have finished with this old thing I will bring it in here.
Return	24. Thanks. I like your skirt too.
Return	25. I like yours too.
Return	26. Thank you, I like your hair also.

2.2 DCT Two Responses

Nonagreement: Scale Down (SD) (Strategy 9)	1. A: Nice watch! B: No...it's pretty old. A:
	RC/Q=Relevant Comment or Question PU=Praise Upgrade
inform inform inform inform (joking) inform inform inform inform (PU) inform RC/Q inform (wrong) (wrong) question inform RC/Q inform + RC/Q RC/Q inform inform inform inform inform inform (PU)	1. It looks new. 2. I like it. 3. looks good to me. (Thanks for saying so.) 4. old, but nice...like me. 5. That's why it is so nice. 6. It's still nice though 7. That's why it is so nice. 8. I thought it looked like an antique. 9. still like it. 10. Where did you get it? 11. It is still very nice. 12. I got it in... 13. Thank you. It was a present 14. Why? 15. But it is very smart. 16. How much is it? 17. It's still nice. Where did you get it? 18. Ok then why do you wear it if it is too old? 19. Well , it's still nice even if it's old. 20. It's still nice though . 21. But it still attracts your attention. 22. Well , it looks really good. 23. But it still looks quite stylish. 24. Wow it looks brand new!

Agreement: Comment History (CH) (Strategy 4)	2. A: Nice bag! B: I bought it for my trip to Japan. A:
	E=Endorsement

	E(RC/Q)=relevant comment or question E(AT=Appreciation Token)
E(RC/Q) E(RC/Q) E (RC/Q) E(RC/Q) E(RC/Q) E (evaluation) E(RC/Q) E(RC/Q) E(RC/Q) E(RC/Q) E (repeat) (wrong) E (RC/Q) E (RC/Q) E(evaluation+ RC/Q) E E E (RC/Q) E(RC/Q) E(RC/Q) E(Reinforcement) E(RC/Q) +E E + E(RC/Q) E(Reformulation)	1. Japan? Wow when are you going there? 2. When are you going to Japan? 3. Wow how was the trip? 4. I'm envious. 5. Do you still need it? 6. Yea , good choice 7.Do you still need it? 8.Oh, I forgot you were taking a trip. When are you off? 9.Is it expensive? 10. What was it like in Japan? 11.That's cool! You have been in Japan! 12.I hold all the things. That's why I need it for. 13. When do you go? 14.Do you always buy new bags for your trip to somewhere? 15.Must have been very expensive. Have you been to Japan before? 16.How wonderful . 17. Cool . 18. How long are you staying there? On business or visiting family or friends? 19.When are you going? 20.Where did you get it from? 21.I am sure it would have met your requirements fully! 22.When were you there? It's lovely . 23.That's nice! When are you going? 24. I like the way that your choices always complement the way you are dressed

Agreement: Return (Strategy 6)	3. A: Wow! I like your glasses! B: Thank you! I like yours too! A:
--------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------

	E(AT=Appreciation Token) E(RC/Q=Relevant Comment or Question) GCC=Giving Credits to the Complimenter
E(AT_RC/Q) E(AT) Joking E(AT) Disagreement_GCC E(AT) E(RC/Q) E(AT) E meta comment Disagreement E(Reformulation) GCC E(AT_Evaluation) E(RC/Q) E(AT_Upgrading) E(AT_RC/Q) E(RC/Q) E(AT) E(Upgrading) E(Upgrading) E(AT) Acknowledgement_E(Evaluation)	1. Thanks. My girl bought them for me. 2. Let's swop them 3. Cheers! 4. Patronising. ?? 5. Thanks. 6. (Laughs) I don't like them, but thanks. 7.Thanks. 8.Where did you get them? From Specks...? 9.Thank you. 10. sonna whop (trade/exchange) 11.Let's stop. 12.They're such a pain to wear! 13.They make you look great. 14.That's very kind of you. 15.Thank you. But mines aren't very expensive. 16.Where did you get them? 17.Thanks, but yours are more remarkable. 18.Thank you. Why do you like my glasses? 19.Where did you get yours? 20.Thanks. 21. I bet , they make you stand out of the crowd. 22.They really complement your face. 23.Thanks! 24. Yeah but yours seem to compliment your face better

Nonagreement: Question (Strategy 10)	4. A: That sounds like a nice plan! B: Do you really think so?
--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------

	A:
Clarify (wrong) Commit E(RC/Q) Commit Commit+ E(Evaluation) Commit Commit+E(RC/Q) Commit Commit Commit Commit+ Commit+E(Upgrading) Commit+E(Evaluation) E(RC/Q) Commit +E(RC/Q) Commit Commit Commit E(RC/Q) E+E(reformulation_RC/Q) Commit+E (Reformulation_RC/Q) Commit+E(Reformulation)	1. I said so, didn't I? 2. It's ok but I think you should go the other way 3. I sure do. 4. Do you want me to repeat it? 5. Of course, I do. 6. Yes, it will be great 7. Of course, I do. 8. Yeah, we've been meaning to go to New York forever! 9. Yeah! 10. Of course, go for it! 11. Yes, I do! 12. Right, let's get it into action then. 13. Yes, definitely 14. Actually, we have no chance like that. 15. Yes, I think you will make a success of it. 16. I hope it works for you. 17. Of course. I wouldn't say that if it wasn't my opinion. 18. Yes, I really think so. 19. Yes. 20. Yes. 21. At least better than many I have seen 22. Yes, it's a great plan. When did you come up with that? 23. Absolutely! Sounds great! I am looking forward to it! 24. Yeah sure I think so. It's simply brilliant

Agreement: Praise Upgrade (PU) (Strategy 3)	5. A: I like your new shirt. B: Really brings out the blue in my eyes, doesn't it? A:
Praise renew	1. That's exactly what I was thinking. 2.

agree	3. Sure does.
?	4. Self-confident. ??
agree	5. Yes, it does.
agree	6. Haha, yes, doesn't it.
agree	7. Yes, it does.
agree	8. Oh yeah, I didn't realize you had blue eyes.
agree	9. Yes, it does.
	10. hadn't noticed
E(Upgrading)	11. No... it shows your legs.
(wrong)	12. I bought it because blue is my favourite colour.
E(Evaluation)	13. Amongst other things
Joking	14. I think you are a colour blind.
E(Reformulation)	15. it suits you and is a good fit too.
OI	16. Are you making a pass at me?
agree	17. Now that you say so—yes, indeed!
agree	18. Yes, it really does.
agree	19. I suppose so.
agree+E(RC/Q)	20. (laugh) Oh yes, I hadn't noticed.
E(RC/Q)	21. Have you given a thought to buy with different checkers?
agree	22. Sure does. It's great.
agree+E(Evaluation)	23. Yes. Also goes very well with your top.
agree+E(Reformulation)	24. *smile* Yeah it shows them off lovely, great choice

Neutral: Other Interpretation (OI) (Strategy 14)	6. A: This is yummy! B: Help yourself with another piece! A:
E(RC/Q)	1. Only one?
E(AT)	2. Thank you. I will.
E(AT)	3. Cheers very much!
E(RC/Q_AT)	4. I'm watching my weight but thank you.
E(AT)	5. Many thanks.
E(AT)	6. Ah cheers :)
E(AT)	7. Many thanks.

Refuse	8.Oh I couldn't. I am on a diet!
E(AT)	9.Thank you. I will.
Question	10.Are you sure?
Refuse	11.I can't. I am too fat.
(wrong)	12.I baked it myself!
Refuse_AT	13.No I couldn't but thanks anyway
	14.Ok, as you wish.
E(AT)	15. I think I will, thank you.
E(AT)	16.Thank you very much.
OI	17.Will there be enough for the others?
E(AT)+GCC	18.Ok thank you. You are so kind.
Refuse	19. Oh I couldn't. I'm on a diet.
E(AT)	20. Thanks. Don't mind if I do.
E(AT_RC/Q)	21. Thanks! I would have done it even without your offer
E(AT_RC/Q)	22.Thanks, it's been a long time since I had anything as
E(AT)	good.
Question+Offer	23.I definitely will! Thank you!
	24. Are you sure ?? I could clear the plate if you let me

Nonagreement: Qualification (Strategy 12)	13.A: I like your haircut. B: But I want it even shorter. A:
	Inform (includes a negation) Advice (includes a negation)
Inform Question Advice Insistence Inform Advice Inform Inform+Advice Inform Question+Inform	1. No, don't. It really suits you. 2. Why is that then? 3. Then get it cut shorter! 4. That's your choice. I have given my opinion. 5. It's so nice like this. 6. Get it cut again then 7.It's so nice like this. 8.No, it looks great! Maybe you could dye it? 9.It suits you. 10.Why? Looks nice as it is.

Advice (wrong?) Inform Inform Inform Inform Question Inform Inform Agree (Inform) Inform Inform+Advice Inform+Advice	11. I think you should just change the colour. 12. It's not cut, just let it grow. 13. No, you look really pretty with it now. 14. Oh no, it is looking quite well. 15. But I like it the way it is, it really does suit you. 16. That is up to you, but I think it suits you how it is 17. Are you sure?? 18. Well I think you look pretty as it is now without being short. 19. No, it looks fine as it is. 20. Yes, I think that would be nice. (I'm not sure. I think I prefer it longer.) 21. still looks good on you, with a different look. 22. No, that would spoil it. Leave it how it is. 23. It looks quite nice like that. But you can try to cut it shorter. It's quite popular to have short hair this year. 24. Yeah I can maybe see what you mean. But like this it really highlights and softens the contours of your face and makes you look years younger.
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Agreement: Reassignment (Strategy 5)	14. A: I like your packing concept. B: Thanks. It's David's idea actually. A:
	Shifting Focused
RC/Q inform Reassignment Reassignment inform Reassignment inform inform	1. Might use it myself next time. 2. Ok but I don't like David. Sorry. 3. Then good on David. 4. Giving credit (to David). 5. I still like it. 6. Then I like David's packing concept! 7. I still like it. 8. I thought so, well he does work at the airport. 9. Never mind. 10. You packed it though , not David.

joking	11.Can I meet David? He seems my type!
Reassignment	12. It's the most logical approach.
inform	13. But I like it anyway
Reassignment	14.What a guy! I always like his pleasure.
RC/Q	15. Well I am impressed, I didn't know David had such excellent ideas.
Reassignment	16. Well it was a good idea
Reassignment	17. Nevertheless , it's a good concept!
Reassignment	18. Well , what can you say....thanks (to David)
inform	19. Well you're pulling it to good use.
RC/Q	20.How did he come up with it?
inform	21. Who so ever had idea, I am concerned about the final product
inform	22. Oh I thought it was yours. I am sure you do better.
Reassignment	23.It's a good idea!
Reassignment	24. *smile* It's nice to see a man that can have ideas like that.

Nonagreement: No Acknowledgement (Silence)(Strategy 13)	15.A: I like your new glasses! B: (silence) (gives no indication of having heard the compliment.) A:
	Silence Return Renew
Silence Silence Request silence RC/Q Repeat RC/Q Inform Repeat	1.(silence)back 2.(silence) 3. Hey, did you hear me? 4. (insecure) 5.Where did you buy them? 6. I like your new glasses! 7.Where did you buy them? 8.No, really. I know you were worried about how they would look, but I like them. 9.I said, "I like your glasses".

Silence	10.(silence)
Question	11.Don't you?
Silence	12. (smiles)
Reformulation	13.Your glasses look really nice
Question	14.What happened man?
Inform	15. No really, I think they are very nice and you look great in them.
Silence	16.(silence)(no response) (If I was giving the compliment and it was not heard, I would not repeat it.)
Repeat	17.I really like your new glasses.
Question	18. Excuse me did you not hear my comment?
Question	19.Don't you like them?
RC/Q	20.Are your glasses new? They're really nice.
OI	21. It seems you are taking my compliment as a joke, aren't you?
Repeat	22.I like your new glasses.
Silence	23.(silence too) (change of topics)
Repeat	24. I said I like your new glasses *whilst smiling sweetly

Nonagreement: Disagreement (Strategy 11)	16.A: Your haircut looks nice! B: No...she cut it too short! A:
	Inform (includes negation)
inform inform evaluation inform inform inform inform inform advice advice showing common grounds	1. I think it looks ok. 2. Well I like it like that 3. Oh , not good. 4. My compliment is genuine. 5. But it is nice. 6. Oh, well I think its nice 7. But it is nice. 8. Well a little bit, but it will soon grow. 9.No, I think it's nice. 10. Why not do it yourself then? 11.Get your money back if you are not happy. 12. I'm not happy with it. 13.No, it's just right.

inform	14. So, her pleasure is better than yours.
evaluation	15. But that's the latest trend and it makes you
inform	look so much younger.
	16. It looks like it has been cut by the welfare.
inform	17. I like it like that.
inform	18. Oh well you still look nice anyway.
inform	19. No, it looks fine as it is.
inform	20. I like it. I think it suits you.
inform	21. It's all about the looks, whether they are short
inform	or long, still looks nice on you. Don't you think
	so?
inform	22. It's cool like that.
inform	23. I think it looks nice! ☺
inform	24. No, she didn't. It's fine.

Agreement: Comment Acceptance (CA) (Strategy 2)	17. A: That's a very funny joke! B: Yeah! I made it up myself. A:
Positive/ Endorsement/	
E E E(Upgrading) E(Upgrading) E(Upgrading) E(Upgrading) E E E(Upgrading) (wrong)	1. I think I heard it before. 2. Good for you. 3. Cool. 4. You have a natural ability for comedy. 5. You are so clever. 6. It's the best I've heard in ages 7. You are so clever. 8. No, you don't say. 9. Nice one. 10. Cool. 11. You should become a comic. 12. Thanks, I based it on you!

E(Upgrading)	13.That's very clever.
E(RC/Q)	14. My friend told me that you were an idiot!
E(Reinforcement)	15. Well you surprise me everyday. I didn't know you were a comedian.
E(RC/Q)	16.Do you have anymore?
E	17. Cool .
E+E(RC/Q)	18. Wow anymore?
E(RC/Q)	19.Maybe you should become a comedian.
	20.(laugh)
E(RC/Q)	21. Have you ever thought about working as a part-time comedian?
E	22.You never did. Did you?
E	23. Really?
E	24. You did !!!! Wow I would never think of something like that

Agreement: Appreciation Token (AT) (Strategy 1) Positive/ Endorsement	18.A: It's a very nice house that you have. B: Thanks! A:
	E(Reinforcement) RC/Q
	Compliment→Agreement→Bridge (New Topic)
E(RC/Q) (wrong) E(RC/Q) (wrong) E(Reinforcement) E(RC/Q)reflective E(Reinforcement) (wrong)	1.It's nearly as nice as mine. 2. Thanks I built it myself thanks 3. How much you paying for it? 4. But I still have lots to do with it to get it as I want it. 5.It is. 6. I wish mine was like yours. 7. It is. 8.I should hope so after all the fun we've been through! 9.costs me a fortune.

E(RC/Q)	10.How much did it cost you?
E(RC/Q)	11. Did you decorate it your self?
E(RC/Q)	12.I spent ages trying to find the right one!
E(RC/Q)	13.How long have you owned it?
E(RC/Q)reflective	14.I wish I had one, too.
E(RC/Q)	15. It shows a lot of loving care and attention. You must be very proud.
E(RC/Q)	16.How long have you lived here?
E(RC/Q)	17.Especially theis very nice.
E(RC/Q)reflective	18. Maybe I will own one like this one.
E(RC/Q)	19.You've obviously put a lot of thought into decorating it.
E(RC/Q)	20.How long have you lived here?
E(RC/Q)	21. I bet maintaining it gives you hard time.
(wrong)	22.You should come stay for a weekend.
E(RC/Q)	23.You must put lots of efforts on it!
E(RC/Q)	24. You are welcome. It really is wonderful how you have your house looking.

Appendix 3: Classroom Exercises on Compliments-Response Exchanges

3.1 Paying Compliments: Initiating Act Exercise

Pay compliments to the following situations.

Write down your compliment in a sentence.

1. You find your friend have a new hairdo when running into her on your way home. What would you say to compliment him/her on the new hair style?

2. In a class party, you find one of your classmates sing very well. What would you say to compliment him/her?

3. You are invited to your colleague's house warming party. After taking a bite of the food he/she offers, you want to pay him/her a compliment. What would you say?

4. Your brother makes you laugh hard with a joke. What would you say to compliment him?

5. You notice your friend wearing a new shirt when you two are sipping coffee in a café. What would you say to compliment him/her?

.

*Compare your answers with your partner.

*Suggested Answers: (omitted)

Compare your answer with your partner and report the compliment

The teacher then discuss the topics and patterns and words

Offers the results of the study: lexical

B.

Brainstorming: What can be impolite when responding to a compliment?

*Suggested Answers: (omitted)

3.2 Paying Compliments: Language Forms Exercise

Choose the best word/phrase from the box below to fit the compliments 1-10.

Change the form of it if needed (e.g. well → Well; loves → love)

The word and phrase provided can be used twice if needed.

glad I think isn't looks loves really such that
well what

- _____ 1. (A) a lovely day!
- _____ 2. You (B) so nice today!
- _____ 3. You really solved the problem (C).
- _____ 4. (D) it wonderful?
- _____ 5. (E) your hair looks good this way.
- _____ 6. You have (F) a beautiful voice.
- _____ 7. I (G) like those shoes.
- _____ 8. The shirt (H) really nice on you!
- _____ 9. (I) is an interesting story!
- _____ 10. I (J) what you are wearing!

3.3 Responding to Compliments: Find the Differences

Chinese and British Compliment Responses

In the following short dialogues, the compliment responses are given by either British native speakers of English or Chinese non-native speakers of English.

* Can you tell the British compliment responses?

Why? How many Chinese compliment response(s) can you find? Why are they more Chinese-like?

1.A: That's a very good story that you wrote!

B: No...it's not that good. Some parts are not well-organized.

2. A: Nice glasses!

B: Thanks. So are yours!

3. A: Nice bag!

B: Thanks. I bought it for my trip to Japan.

4. A: You sing very well!

B: No...don't say that. I'm embarrassed.

5.A: That's a nice watch!

B: Thanks. But this watch is not nice at all.

6.A: I like your packing concept!

B: Thanks. It's David's idea actually.

3.4 Responding to Compliment: Identify the Compliment Response Strategies)

Here are some compliment response strategies frequently-used by British people. Choose a strategy to fit each compliment-response sequence 1-10. Choose from the Table below.

Compliment Response Strategies

- A. Giving Credits B. Return C. Appreciation Token
D. Comment History E. Giving Credits to the Complimenter
F. Reassignment

_____ 1. A: Nice bag!

B: I bought it for my trip to Japan.

_____ 2. A: Wow! I like your glasses!

B: Thank you! I like yours too!

_____ 3. A: That's a great packing concept!

B: I learned this packing from a world traveler.

_____ 4. A: That's a great haircut!

B: Thanks for saying so.

_____ 5. A: You've improved a lot on your speaking!

B: Thank you. That's with your help.

_____ 6. A: Wow! You have such a nice voice!

B: Thank you!

*Can you think of other kind of responses to these compliments?

3.5 Compliment-Response Exercise (Mingling)

Divide the learners into two groups. The learners in the first group are given a cue card each and are thus assigned to respond to the compliments with a certain strategy.

(The numbers of strategies used are echoing the true occurrences of them in the British Compliment Responses retrieved. So that the learners)

The second group of learners are to move around and compliment on people in the first group. As long as the learners in the second group identify the right strategy used by pointing without speaking and approved by the compliment recipient, he or she gets a sticker from the compliment recipient.

The learner with the most stickers becomes the winner.

This exercise is suggested to be played three to four times with different subjects complimented, including appearances, ability and personal belongings. The first group and the second group take turn playing the roles of complimenter and compliment recipients.

*Equipment: Cue Cards of Compliment Response Strategies
Award Cards and Award Stickers
Coloured Bracelets for Group One (Or any objects that easily separate the group member visually.)

*Time: Each Turn Takes around 10

*Level: Upper Intermediate and Advanced EFL Learners

3.6 Identify the Complimenter

Here are some compliment-response exchanges between British people.
Can you tell the relationships between the complimenter and recipient?
Choose the identification of the complimenter for the situation given from the table below.

Complimenter:

A: teacher	B: classmate	C: close friend	D: mother
E: stranger			

Situation:

_____ 1. A: You have such a nice voice!
B: I take after the dog.

_____ 2. A: You've improved a lot!
B: Thanks! That's thanks to you!

_____ 3. A: I like what you are wearing.
B: Thank you, but I didn't buy it here.

_____ 4. A: That's a great packing concept!
B: I learned it from you!

_____ 5. A: That's a nice haircut!
B: Thanks! I am glad you like it!

*How did you decide who is the complimenter of each situation? Is there any clue? Discuss with your partners.

3.7 Cooperative Follow-up Exercise

People try to cooperate with others in a conversation (Grice 1975). There are four maxims to keep with in order to talk politely: Quantity, Quality, Modesty and Relevant Maxim. Decide which Maxim(s) are the follow-up moves of the compliment-response exchanges below adhered to.

Label them with: Quantity, Quality, Modest and Relevant

- _____ 1. A: That's a nice watch!
B: No...it's pretty old.
A: But it still looks quite stylish.
- _____ 2. A: Nice bag!
B: I bought it for my trip to Japan.
A: Japan? Wow...when are you going there?
- _____ 3. A: Nice glasses!
B: Thanks! I like yours too!
A: Thanks, but yours are more remarkable.
- _____ 4. A: I like your packing concept.
B: Thank you. It is David's idea actually.
A: Well it is a good idea.
- _____ 5. A: It's a very nice house that you have.
B: Thanks.
A: How long have you lived here?

3.8 Identify the Adjacency Pairs

Select from the follow-up (A)-(G) to complete the dialogues below.

(A) How long have you owned it?

(C) No, it's great like that!

(D) I still like it!

(E) Cool! You are so clever!

(F) Of course, I do.

(G) How wonderful!

1. A: That sounds like a nice plan.

B: Do you really think so?

A: _____

2. A: That's a great packing concept!

B: Thanks. It's David's idea actually.

A: _____

3. A: Nice haircut!

B: But I want it even shorter/

A: _____

4. A: That's a very funny joke!

B: Yeah! I made it up myself.

A: _____

5. A: It's a very nice house that you have.

B: Thanks!

A: _____

6. A: Nice bag.

B: Thanks. I bought it for my trip to Japan.

A: _____